

13.06.00.0009

April 1999

FACT SHEET

RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD
Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant
Bethpage, New York

INTRODUCTION

In 1975, The Department of Defense (DOD) took the first step to create a program to identify and clean up environmental problems at federal facilities. These problems were a result of past industrial processes and waste handling practices, which included on-site disposal of daily operational wastes such as chemicals, petroleum products, cleaning solvents, and degreasers. Although acceptable for many years, the old industrial processes and ways of handling wastes are now known to be potentially damaging to the environment.

DOD tasked the Armed Services with investigating sites where on-site disposal, spills, or storage of these materials may have occurred. This program became known as the DOD Installation Restoration (IR) Program. One policy of this program is to involve the local community throughout the IR process by: establishing communication channels with representatives of the community; making information available in a timely manner; providing opportunities for public comment on documents; and, most recently, establishing Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs).

WHAT IS A RAB?

A RAB is an advisory board designed to act as a focal point for the exchange of information between the U.S. Navy and the local community regarding environmental restoration activities. The RAB is intended to bring together community members who reflect the diverse interests within the community, enabling an early and continued "two-way" flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the community and the decision-makers for the Navy's property. The RAB works in partnership with the decision-makers on cleanup issues and related matters.



RABs do not make decisions on environmental restoration activities, but provide information, suggestions, and community input to be used by the Navy in making decisions on actions and proposed actions involving releases or threatened releases. RABs do not replace community outreach and participation activities required by law, regulation or policy. All community relations requirements must still be met.

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A RAB?

The responsibilities of a RAB are to:

- ★ Conduct regular meetings, open to the public, at convenient times and locations.
- ★ Keep meeting minutes and make them available to interested parties.
- ★ Develop and use a mailing list of names and addresses of interested parties who wish to receive information on the environmental program.
- ★ Provide a forum for individual members to provide input and make recommendations on environmental restoration issues to the Navy. RABs do not vote on issues or make recommendations as a body.
- ★ Establish a procedure for public participation and responding to questions and comments for the public at RAB meetings.

JOIN US!

RAB meetings are held regularly, and are always open to the public. For more information about the RAB, or to find out when the next meeting will be held, please write or call.



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You may also review information about the environmental programs underway at the facility by visiting the public Information Repository. Documents at the Repository include technical work plans, reports, and a Community Relations Plan. All documents are available to be photocopied at a small expense for personal reference.

INFORMATION REPOSITORY

Bethpage Public Library
47 Powel Avenue
Bethpage, New York 11714
(516) 931-3907

Hours of Operation:
M-F: 9:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Sat: 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sun: 12 p.m. - 4 p.m. (Oct. - April only)

